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ABSTRACT

A survey carried out by Westat, Inc., under contract with the Center for Statistics found that up to 73 percent of all private schools offered some kind of special services in 1983-84. Questionnaires were sent to a sample of 2,298 schools meeting the survey criteria. Of these schools 1,869 (81 percent) responded. Catholic elementary/secondary schools far outpaced other private schools in offering remedial reading: 85 percent compared to 62 percent of other religiously affiliated schools and 71 percent of nonaffiliated schools. Diagnostic services were offered by 69 percent of the Catholic schools compared with 49 percent of other affiliated and 60 percent of nonaffiliated schools. Over 64 percent of nonaffiliated schools offered remedial math, followed by Catholic (62 percent) and affiliated (49 percent) schools. Areas sparsely served by private schools were bilingual education (9 percent); English as a second language (18 percent); vocational and technical education (15 percent); and special programs for handicapped students (22 percent). Data is displayed in two tables. (MLF)

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March 1986

Pupil Services in Private Schools, 1983-84

Catholic elementary/secondary schools far outpaced other private schools in offering remedial reading in 1983-84. A survey conducted by the Center for Statistics (CS) found that 85 percent of Catholic schools provided remedial reading, the most frequently offered of nine major student services (table 1). About 62 percent of other religiously affiliated schools and 71 percent of nonaffiliated schools offered remedial reading.

In all, up to 73 percent of all private schools (20,200 of the 27,700 total) offered some kind of special services in 1983-84. Over half the schools offered diagnostic services (59 percent of the schools) and remedial mathematics (58 percent). Again, a higher percentage of Catholic schools offered diagnostic services than did the others -- 69 percent, compared with 49 percent of other affiliated and 60 percent of nonaffiliated schools. Over 64 percent of nonaffiliated schools offered remedial math, followed by Catholic (62 percent) and affiliated (49 percent) schools.

In contrast with the three most-offered services noted above, the survey found three areas sparsely served by private schools. The first was language training for pupils whose dominant or home language was not English. About 9 percent of the schools offered bilingual education, and about 18 percent taught English as a second language. Next, vocational and technical education was offered in 15 percent of the schools. Finally, relatively few private schools offered special programs for handicapped students (22 percent). The exception was schools at the "other" instructional level* (52 percent), many of which were established solely to serve the handicapped.

*Schools classified at the "other" level provide only alternative (nontraditional) instruction, special education, or vocational/technical education.

EA 020 339

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About the Survey

The source of these data is the National Survey of Private Schools, fall 1983, carried out by Westat, Inc. under contract with the Center for Statistics. This survey used two separate samples (one from a list and the other from an area frame) to obtain a more comprehensive selection of respondents than had previously been known to CS. This was accomplished by supplementing the CS list of private schools with additional schools discovered through intensive investigation of 75 geographical areas.

To be considered for the survey, a school had to:

a. Have a school day of at least 4 hours;
b. Be in a session at least 160 days per year;
c. Provide instruction to pupils at or above the first grade and below the postsecondary level;
d. Be located in a place other than a private home;
e. Be privately administered.

Questionnaires were sent to a sample of 2,298 of the schools meeting these criteria. Of these schools 1,869 responded. The responses were appropriately weighted to produce national estimates for various categories, some of which are included in this report.

Using the Tables

Since estimates in this report are based on sample data, they may differ from figures obtained from a complete census using the same methods. The standard error of the estimate is a measure of the difference between the sample estimates and their average value over all possible samples. One can generally assume that an interval of two standard errors above and below the estimate would include the average of all possible samples 95 percent of the time.

For example, it is estimated that the number of schools having programs for the gifted and talented is 11,946 (table 1). The standard error for this data item is given as 491 (table 2). Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that no more than 12,928 schools (11,946 + 982), and no fewer than 10,964 schools (11,946 - 982) have these programs.

For the reader's information, any standard errors that exceed 20 percent of the estimate are indicated with an asterisk in the table of standard errors.

For more detailed information on this survey and its results, contact the survey project officer, Jeffrey Williams, at the Center for Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20208-1401, telephone (202) 254-5660.

Table 1. -- Private schools offering special programs, by instructional level and affiliation: Fall 1983

Program	Total		Instructional level								Affiliation					
			Elementary		Secondary		Elementary/ secondary		Other		Catholic		Other		No affiliation	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	27,694	100.0	15,631	100.0	2,621	100.0	5,241	100.0	4,201	100.0	9,740	100.0	9,966	100.0	7,988	100.0
Bilingual education	2,382	8.6	1,159	7.4	260	9.9	560	10.7	404	9.6	584	6.0	861	8.6	938	11.7
English as a second language	4,841	17.5	2,373	15.2	655	25.0	976	18.6	837	19.9	1,733	17.8	1,507	15.1	1,602	20.1
Remedial reading	20,183	72.9	11,559	73.9	1,568	59.8	3,893	74.3	3,164	75.3	8,265	84.9	6,213	62.4	5,705	71.4
Remedial mathematics	16,031	57.9	8,687	55.6	1,359	51.8	3,175	60.6	2,810	66.9	6,028	61.9	4,872	48.9	5,131	64.2
Programs for handicapped	6,123	22.1	2,486	15.9	413	15.8	1,041	19.9	2,184	52.0	1,959	20.1	1,586	15.9	2,578	32.3
Programs for gifted and talented	11,946	43.1	6,036	38.6	1,264	48.2	2,671	51.0	1,975	47.0	3,712	38.1	4,165	41.8	4,068	50.9
Vocational and technical programs	4,150	15.0	472	3.0	988	37.7	1,695	32.3	994	23.7	1,133	11.6	1,531	15.4	1,485	18.6
Diagnostic services	16,422	59.3	9,067	58.0	1,405	53.6	3,188	60.8	2,761	65.7	6,768	69.5	4,884	49.0	4,770	59.7

Note: Because of rounding, details may not add to row totals. Details will not add to column totals, since many schools are in multiple categories.

Table 2. — Standard errors for estimates of the private schools offering special programs, by instructional level and affiliation: Fall 1983

Program	Total		Instructional level								Affiliation					
			Elementary		Secondary		Elementary/ secondary		Other		Catholic		Other		No affiliation	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	712	-	412	-	158	-	299	-	266	-	157	-	479	-	438	-
Bilingual education	302	1.0	180	1.1	69*	2.8*	183*	2.7*	117*	2.7*	88	0.9	197*	1.8*	194*	2.4*
English as a second language	353	1.2	263	1.6	82	3.4	233*	4.0*	145	3.2	234	2.5	208	1.8	193	2.2
Remedial reading	553	1.4	413	2.0	92	4.1	274	2.9	225	3.6	223	2.6	316	2.2	358	2.4
Remedial mathematics	516	1.1	350	1.7	95	3.7	245	3.1	268	4.8	246	2.2	310	2.1	310	1.9
Programs for handicapped	386	1.4	229	1.4	66	2.1	163	2.6	181	3.4	182	1.9	235	2.2	256	3.1
Programs for gifted and talented	491	1.3	241	1.3	82	3.4	279	4.1	203	4.2	111	0.9	347	2.4	443	4.9
Vocational and technical programs	337	1.2	166*	1.0*	109	4.5	216	3.9	135	3.0	185	1.9	230	2.5	192	2.4
Diagnostic services	475	1.5	291	1.7	115	3.9	260	3.2	248	4.5	200	1.7	334	2.7	295	2.2

- Not applicable.
* Standard error is greater than 20 percent of estimate.